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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 1 (Currently Amended). A decoding protection method, for operating on
2 information obtained with a video data encoding method using a DCT (Discrete
3 Cosine Transform) method of an MPEG algorithm, which information is transferred
4 through a medium and comprises main data which are to be decoded, the decoding
5 protection method comprising the steps of:
6 detecting medium protection data which are also transferred through said
7 medium;
8 limiting reproduction based upon at least a film classification system;
9 generating apparatus protection data which comprise at least first apparatus
10 protection data and second apparatus protection data,
11 wherein said first apparatus protection data are specific to a region or a
12 country in which said main data are to be decoded and are unmodifiable by a recipient
13 of said main data and said second apparatus protection data can be modified by the
14 recipient to selectively define a plurality of protection levels including at least two
15 levels which are respectively specific to adults and to children;
16 defining a protection level based on said medium protection data and on said
17 apparatus protection data, in combination; and

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18 executing decoding of said main data in accordance with said protection
19 level,
20 wherein the combination of said medium protection data and said first
21 apparatus protection data specifies that said main data are decoded either in their
22 entirety or not at all, and the combination of said medium protection data and said
23 second apparatus protection data specifies that said main data are decoded in their
24 entirety, partially, or not at all,
25 wherein, for each combination of protection levels based on said medium
26 protection data and said apparatus protection data, there is a corresponding range of
27 one or more possible values of final protection level, said corresponding range
28 extending from a least severe value to a most severe value, and
29 wherein said [[data]] medium conveys both said medium protection data and
30 said main data in an identical form.

1 2 (Original). A decoding protection method in accordance with claim 1,
2 wherein said step of executing decoding of said main data comprises:
3 decoding said main data either in their entirety or not at all, in accordance
4 with said combination of said medium protection data and said first apparatus
5 protection data, and
6 decoding said main data in their entirety, partially, or not at all, in accordance
7 with said combination of said medium protection data and said second apparatus
8 protection data.

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1 3 (Original). A decoding protection method in accordance with claim 2,
2 wherein said step of executing decoding of said main data further comprises
3 executing decoding of said main data in accordance with a value of final protection
4 level between the least severe value and the most severe value in accordance with said
5 combination of protection levels.

1 4 (Original). A decoding protection method in accordance with claim 1,
2 wherein said step of executing decoding of said main data further comprises executing
3 decoding of said main data in accordance with a value of final protection level between
4 the least severe value and the most severe value in accordance with said combination
5 of protection levels.